

FOREIGN CHARACTERISTICS IN NEW YORK ARCHITECTURE

Examples of Every Recognized Architectural Style Found Crowded Together on Manhattan Island

NEW YORK is no less cosmopolitan in its architecture than in its population. Crowded together within the narrow boundaries of Manhattan Island will be found examples of every recognized architectural style and many which are not often in violent contrast to each other. A hasty search will reveal many interesting corners, sometimes a block or more of buildings which might have been transplanted bodily from some foreign city.

Many of these reproductions have been carried out with great fidelity and the illusion of being in a foreign city is perfect. New York's famous skyline is composed of lines borrowed from several countries. It is almost impossible indeed to walk for a block on any street without meeting with some suggestion in the facades of the many countries from which the population is drawn. The styles are besides borrowed from many periods, many of them very ancient, so that the famous cities of the past as well as the present are represented.

There is more than a suggestion of ancient Rome in several New York streets. The colonnade of the new Post office, for example, with its full score of acres of columns would have been worthy of Rome at its height. The colonnade has been carried out with a classic severity and correctness which would doubtless have won high praise from Roman critics. The colonnade before the new Municipal Building, although of somewhat more modern lines, would have looked well facing the Roman forum. The facade of a great bank on Broad street and a familiar block on Lafayette place hold the same suggestion. The doorways, windows and other details of many modern office buildings have been so closely copied from famous Roman originals that a citizen of ancient Rome would feel at home in such surroundings.

No city has probably exerted a greater influence upon New York's architecture than Paris. In many sections of the older city the mansard roof, or some adaptation of it, lends a suggestion of Paris roof lines to entire blocks. There are hundreds of examples of modern Parisian architecture in all parts of the city. Many of the newer apartment houses and hotels might

have been transplanted bodily from Paris, so closely do they follow the originals. Scores of examples might be sighted of doorways in the newer office buildings, hotel and apartment houses which exactly reproduce Parisian originals. The beauties of the French chateaus have also been freely borrowed. A famous chateau has been almost perfectly reproduced on Riverside Drive, and the surrounding lawns and trees complete the picture.

The influence of London on New York's architecture has naturally been great, although less than that of Paris. Half a century ago many blocks of houses were built exactly reproducing London. One of the most interesting of these will be found in a narrow street in Greenwich Village which might have been transferred intact from Whitechapel. The bracket lanterns and the absence of a cornice of any kind give the block a surprisingly foreign appearance. In the neighboring streets and squares of Greenwich Village one could easily imagine himself in London of the past generation. Several of the smartest shops on Fifth avenue and the side streets are closely copied from originals in Bond or Regent street.

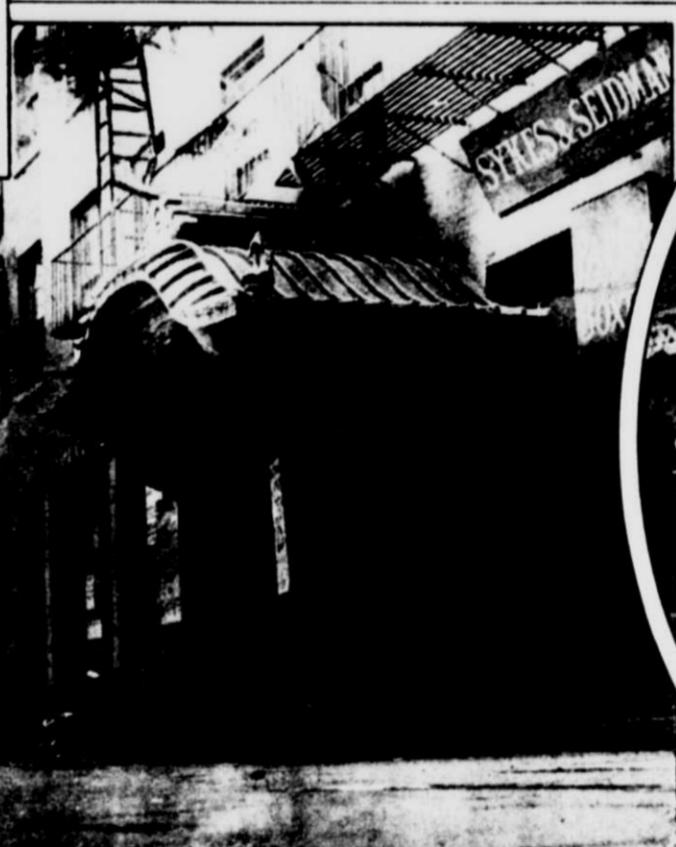
The skyline of New York is broken by scores of church spires, more or less in the spirit of Sir Christopher Wren, and almost all of our church architecture strongly suggests English originals.

The Italian influence is clearly shown in many of New York's newer residences on the upper East Side. The general design of famous originals, especially in Milan, has been freely used. The most notable example is probably the new residence occupying the entire block on Fifth avenue, formerly the site of the Lenox Library. The Italian loggia is the most beautiful of its kind in the city.

It is surprising that New York, because of its Dutch ancestry, has not more of the architecture of Holland, either ancient or modern. The original town of New Amsterdam has, of course, long since been buried and not a single memorial remains. In recent years, however, an attempt has been made in several parts of the city to introduce the architecture of modern Holland,



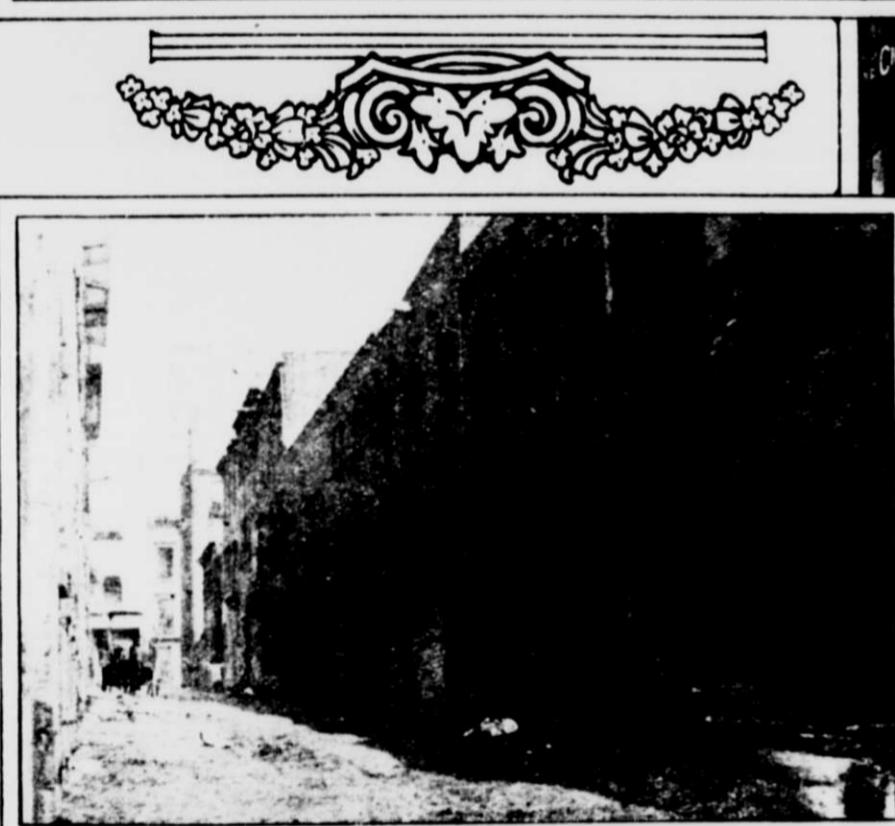
ROME



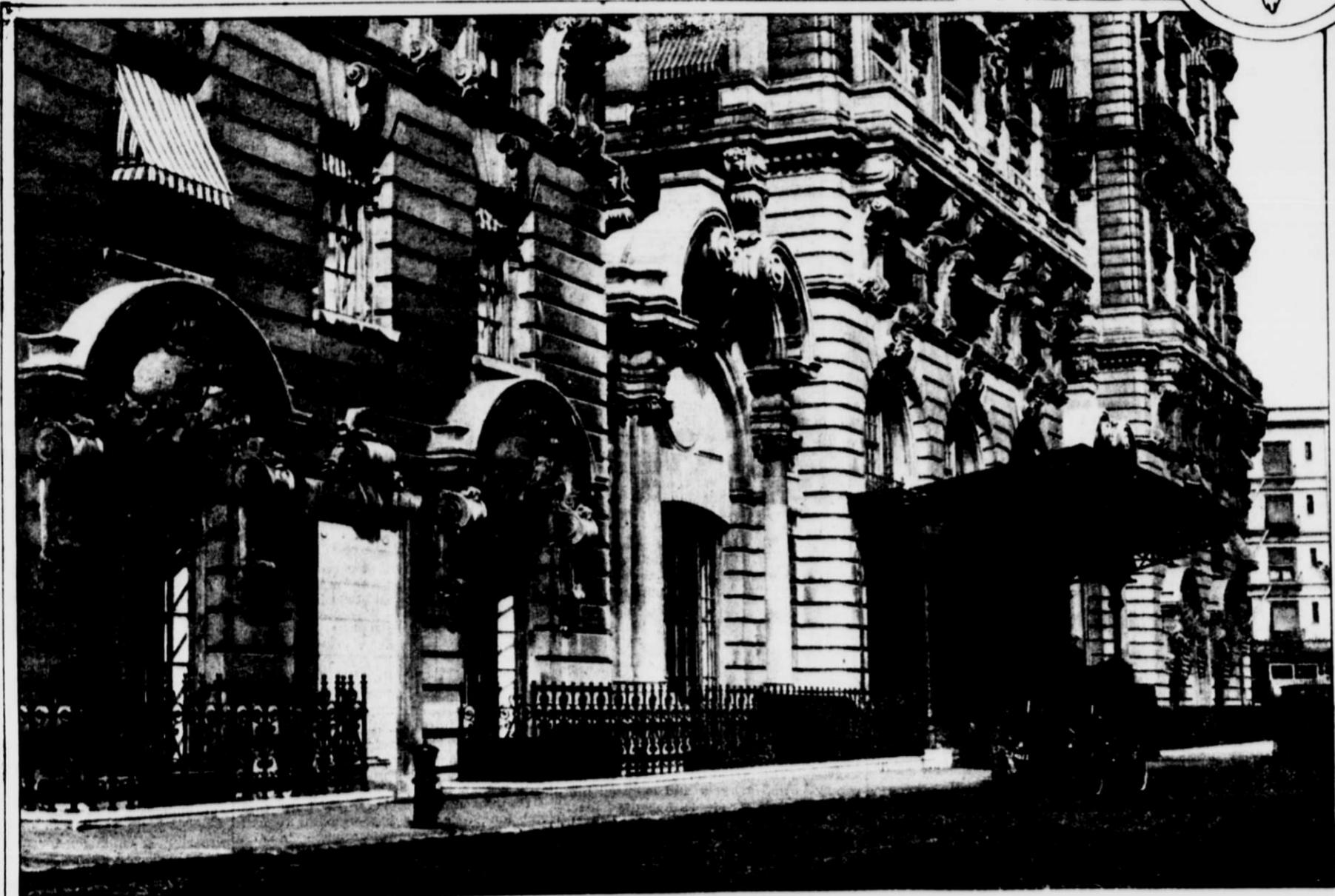
LONDON



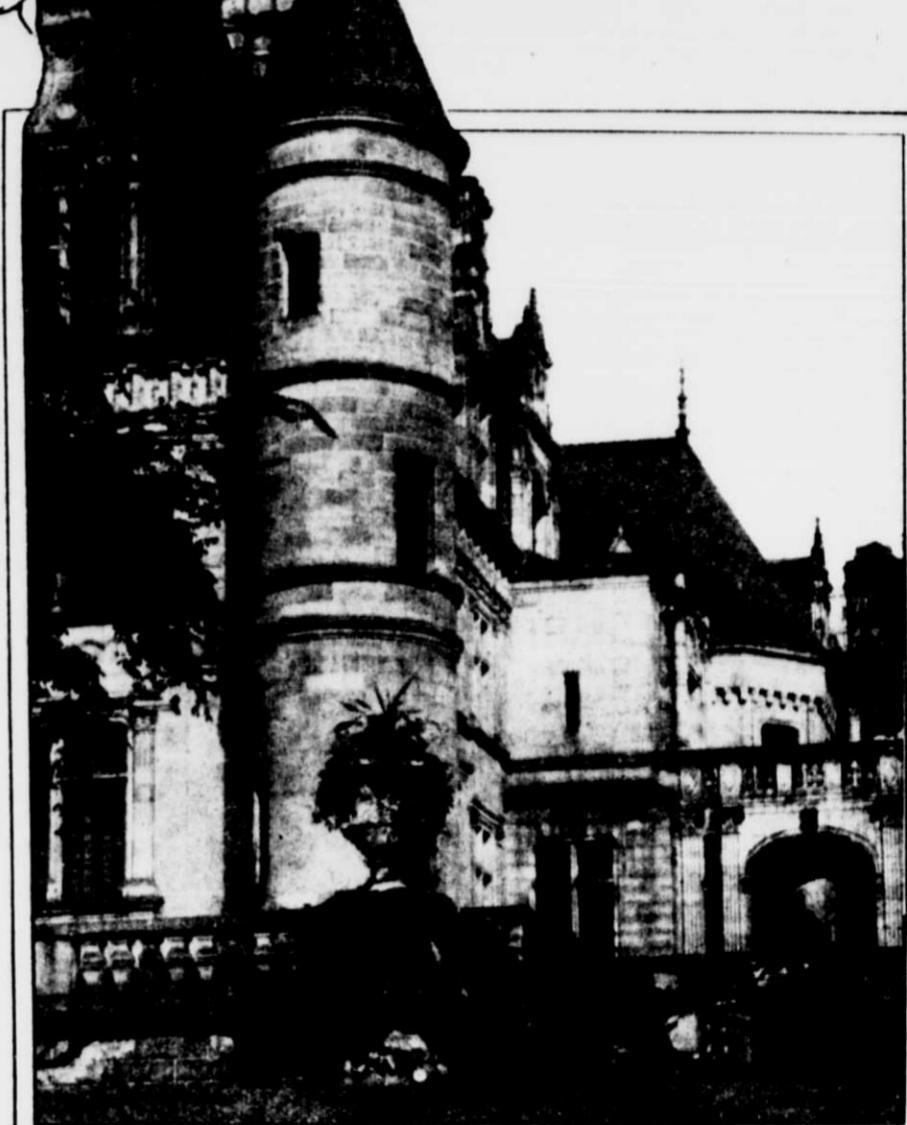
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LONDON SLUM



MODERN PARIS



A FRENCH CHATEAU